

The Boy in the Other Window

by parasolghost

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Summary: Some people yearn to fall in love at first sight, but Hiccup finds that being friends with someone for over a decade produces the same effect. Sometimes, having the window across from the strange boy in the house next door can have pretty unexpected results. Modern day HiJack AU

1. Chapter 1

Chapter 1

I've been living in this house for as long as I can remember. In fact, I think my dad and I moved in right after this most of the neighborhood finished construction. It's just a regular suburban home: two stories, three bedrooms, a pretty spacious kitchen, a nice living room. I guess it could be considered small for the check of a big-time football coach like my dad, but then again, I guess you could say it's rather large for a family of two.

It was pretty lonely at first—we were the only people living in the neighborhood since it was so new. I used to wander around the neighborhood with my dad and look at all the houses that were done. They were all exactly the same on the outside: brown walls with white rims; black doors that sat atop clean, wide porches; large windows decorating the fronts of the houses; shrubs in one uniform row, only broken by the spaces between the houses. There was one thing that I noticed on the walks though, each house was separate from the other, separated by a large space and a seven-foot-tall fence, not even a single roof shingle of one house touching the shingle of another. Each one kept a uniform distance from the other, as if some invisible force was pushing the houses away from each other, absolutely forbidding any physical contact. Well, all but ours.

When I came back from a walk with my dad one day when I was five, I noticed that the roof between the first and second story of our house touched that of another. In fact, it looked as if the neighboring

house was leaning into our house, making the roofs look as if they were conjoined. Upon closer inspection, I realized that one of the windows facing that part of the house was my bedroom window, and I figured that I could walk from one house to another on the roof if I wanted to, but I knew I would be too scared to try that. I asked my dad about itâ€”he said that the builders made a mistake. I thought it was a silly mistake, but I didn't question it more. My dad doesn't like to question things too much, anyway.

It didn't really matter, since no one moved into that house for the longest time anyway. In fact, no one moved into the neighborhood for a long time, and when they did, there was no one my age for the first few months. When kids my age moved in, I was excited, but immediately disappointed when I realized that they weren't really interested in me beyond using me as a victim of their pranks and teasing, so I hid in the house most of the time, in my room, reading books about fairytales and magical creatures and mysterious animals from all over the world. I found myself absolutely fascinated by animals, and I guess I could say that most of the stray cats and dogs that I've come by have taken a liking to me as well.

My interests aside, eventually the construction stopped and eventually the houses were filled with people from all different backgrounds. Well, all of the houses, except the one next to ours. The people looking at it probably noticed the roof mishap and decided against moving in. After all, who wants their kid to have a room just a walk away from the weird little boy who sat in his room all day?

Eventually, someone did move into the house next door. I was six years old and it was two o'clock on a summer morning. I was huddled under a thin blanket, trying to get some sleep, when the loud sound of a truck woke me up from my slumber. I rubbed my eyes in irritation and glared at the light that flitted through the cracks between my curtains and filled my bedroom walls.

I threw my blanket off and tugged a large dragon stuffed animal towards my bedroom door. I had to stand on my toes to get a good grip on the knob and swing my entire body just to get it open. The door creaked open slightly and I released the doorknob and fell to the ground with a soft thud. I peaked around the door and felt a chill run down my spine when I realized how dark it was.

"Dad?" I called quietly. "Something's outside."

I was answered by a series of deep and loud snores. I didn't want to wake him up, so I closed the door. The lights from outside became brighter and I was always a pretty curious kid, so I dragged myself and my stuffed animal towards the window. I swung my leg over the top of my toy chest, my dragon slipping from my grasp as I hoisted myself up to peer over the windowsill. When I found that I still couldn't see what was happening, I mustered all the strength I could to lift myself onto the windowsill. I stood up and let the curtain fall behind me as I pressed my face against the glass.

From what I could see, there were about six people outside that were moving stuff into the house. There was a man and a woman standing together and talking to one of the movers. I could also see a shorter figure standing next to the woman. I squinted, but I couldn't really make out anything specific. I watched them for a while before they

went inside the house, then I watched the movers bring in their stuff. They had endless boxes of possessions and nice furniture. I watched as they brought in nice couches and tables and a piano. Suddenly, a light even brighter than the truck's light surprised me and I ducked under the window with a nervous squeak, when I realized that I was being silly and no one would see me, I peeked over the windowsill. For the first time, the light in the room across from mine was turned on and there was a boy about my age running around the room, his face lit up with excitement despite it being so early in the morning.

"Hiccup?"

My dad's call surprised me so much that I fell onto the floor, my fall softened by my dragon stuffed animal. The door creaked open and I saw my dad look in. "Hiccup, why are you on the floor?"

"I fell," I answered simply as my dad came over and hoisted me up with one hand. He laid me into bed and handed me my stuffed animal as he tried to tuck me in messily. I pulled the blanket up to my neck and he pat my head before walking towards the door. Before he left, he looked out the window and noticed the light breaking through the curtains.

"We have some new neighbors, Hiccup," he said. "Why don't we introduce ourselves tomorrow?"

I just groaned stubbornly, pulling the blanket over my head. My dad didn't reply and a few seconds later, the door shut quietly and silence filled the room. I shut my eyelids tightly and soon I found myself in a deep slumber.

* * *

><p>When I woke up in the morning, my curtains had been thrown open unceremoniously and my bedroom door was ajar. The bright sunlight that shone through the window hurt my eyes and I attempted to lull myself back to sleep by hiding under my blanket and pressing my face to my pillow, but to no avail. As I lay in bed and became adjusted to the light, the sound of the doorbell rang throughout the house, which shook as my father stomped towards the door downstairs.<p>

" You must be Mr. and Mrs. Frost! Please come in," I heard my father say. "Hiccup! Get up and get dressed! We have guests!" he called to me. I groaned and mumbled complaints to no one in particular as I threw off my blanket and shut the door to change out of my pajamas into a suitable outfit- or at least, suitable for a five-year-old boy. Apparently, I figured a t-shirt and a poorly matched pair of shorts fit under this category. After putting on my clothes, I shuffled downstairs quietly and awkwardly peeked around the wall to catch a glimpse of our new neighbors.

Two adults sat opposite my father, drinking tea and making polite conversation. Even at my young age, I could plainly see how intimidated they were by my fatherâ€"their feet were placed firmly on the ground and they were sitting as if they would have to get up and run for their lives at any minute. I was used to it though, so I didn't really give it to much attention.

However, what did gain my full attention was the boy sitting between

his parents staring up at my father in awe. He looked about my age and was small, just like me. He had a shock of short brown hair, whose color was not unlike my own, and large brown eyes. Maybe the thing that drew me most to this boy was how he gazed up at my father with aweâ€”something that I wasn't used to seeing when I was five and sort of grabbed my attention.

"Hiccup!" my father called me from my thoughts and I jumped in surprise..

I shuffled over to him and climbed onto the couch cushion next to my father, who pat my head as gently as he could, but still making me cringe as he unintentionally pushed me into the couch cushion like a nail being hammered to a piece of wood.

"A huge difference from his father isn't he?" my father smiled as the Frosts stared at me in utter bemusement. "Don't worryâ€”one day he'll be big and strong just like his father, right, Hiccup?"

I found myself at a loss for words, searching my very small vocabulary for something to say as the Frosts sized me up (or, maybe, down). I stared at my feet in embarrassment and out of the corner of my eye, I could see the other boy trying to stifle his laughter and any ideas I had of trying to befriend the Frost boy in hopes that he would be different from the other kids were almost completely wiped from my mind.

So I sat there in agonizing awkwardness as the Frosts warmed up to my father and they talked jovially about the neighborhood and the town and what they had to offer young families such as theirs. My gaze wandered around and constantly dropped to the floor whenever I felt that someone was looking at me. As the conversation wore on, I found my eyes stuck on the boy, who sat in front of me, who was fidgeting between his parents restlessly and looking around the room in curiosity. His feet swung back and forth, almost kicking the coffee table a few times and his hair shook every time he moved his head to look at another piece of decorum that covered the walls. Within a few minutes his expression changed from one of curiosity to one of boredom as he rolled his eyes and leaned back on the couch cushions before pulling himself back into a straight position a few seconds after laying back. Suddenly his movements stopped and he turned his head towards me.

Our eyes met for a split second and I jumped in surprise before dropping my gaze towards the floor once again. The moment was so awkward I could feel his remain on me. I glanced up for a moment to see him looking at me, surprisingly, in curiosity rather than disdain. I lifted my head a bit to actually look at him and he opened his mouth to speak.

"Well, it was nice meeting you," the older Frosts rose from their seats and my father mimicked them, pushing me out of my seat so I could do the same.

"It was my pleasure," my father said as they walked towards the door. "Please feel free to come over whenever you like."

And with that, the Frosts shuffled out the door, their son following close behind them. I peeked at them from behind my father's leg and caught sight of them just as the boy took his first step out the

door.

I was surprised to see him stop and turn to find me. "Bye, Hiccup!" he waved at me and smiled as his mother tugged his hand so they could leave.

I was too stunned to reply and, by the time I found the right thing to say, I was staring at the back of the door, words at the tip of my tongue, begging to be heard by the first child to look at me with such innocent curiosity and amusement:

"What's your name?"

_****A/N: ****_And voila! That's it for the first chapter of my HiJack AU! For those of you wondering, at this point in the story, Hiccup is reflecting on the past, or more specifically, when he and Jack are about six years old. They'll grow up soon enough, so that's all good and cool.

The cover art was drawn by the amazing tumblr user yakfrost, who very kindly allowed me to use their art for this fic! Check out their blog for more amazing art!

Anyway, thanks again for reading! If you like it, please leave a review and I'll try to update the next chapter as soon as I can! UwU

2. Chapter 2

Chapter 2

By noon, I was done with breakfast, properly dressed by my father, and back in my room, sitting in my bed with a large pop-up book propped in my lap. My father had encouraged me to go outside and play with the other kids, but when I peered out the window to see that they were playing baseball, I decided that my best option would be to stay away from any game involving bats.

Despite my caution, I could still hear pebbles pelting my window and taunts from the kids outside shaking the windows. I slipped under my bedcovers, curled up with the book pressed firmly to my chest. The sounds of the pebbles beating against the window became harder and harder and soon the glass made a slight cracking noise and I braced myself for impact.

"Hey!"

A voice that I didn't recognize with the usual mix of taunts cried above the others and I became afraid of the prospect of having the "anti-Hiccup club" increase in its membership.

"Why don't you pick on someone your own size, you scaredy-cats?"

I almost jumped up from my bed in surprise as I heard the sound of a window being pushed to the side harshly and the roof tiles shaking as something hopped onto them. I threw off my blanket and darted towards the window in curiosity, still not capable of seeing what was happening due to my height. The sound of a stretching rubber band sparked my interest even further and I scrambled onto my toy box and

up on the windowsill, my book still clutched under my arm.

The first thing I noticed was that the glass in the window was cracked, just as I had anticipated. Long streaks reached for the corners of the window, stretching like spider legs. I pressed my face against the window to get a better view of what was happening, peering through the cracks, which were only on the outside of the window. My eyes widened when I saw my new neighbor standing on the roof, dangerously close to the edge. His face was lit up with glee and a smile was stretched from ear to ear. He held a slingshot at the ready, flinging some sort of small object from the rubber bands, laughing as my bullies fled in terror.

When he turned to go back through his window, which was propped open with a stick, he noticed me gazing at him and I squeaked in fear and held up my book to block my face.

I peaked at him from behind the book to see him staring at me in excitement. I lowered my book, shocked at his expression as he began talking to me.

"Is that a dragon book?" he asked, his eyes lighting up eagerly as he took a step closer to my side of the roof. He slid down the tiles and landed in the middle of where our roofs conjoined. For a minute, I thought that he had fallen and, before I knew it, my window was flung open in panic and I was leaning out the window precariously on all fours.

"Are you okay?" I called to him. He looked at me in surprise, but instead of replying, waved for me to join him on the roof. I glanced down at the roof tiles beneath me, which were slightly cracked and looked rather unstable from what I could see. If I made a mistake, I could be sliding off the edge of the roof in a matter of seconds. I bit my lip and considered just ignoring the strange boy and running back into my room, but as I contemplated my choices a cool summer breeze ruffled my hair and soothed me. It was quite a difference from my sweltering hot bedroom.

I peeked behind my shoulder into my bedroom, as if expecting someone to be there to scold me for even thinking of doing something as dangerous as climbing onto the roof, but I only saw the closed door and the my bed, whose sheets were wrinkled from my scrambling. I turned myself around and extended my short legs cautiously, lowering myself onto the roof. I closed my eyes as my feet met the tiles, expecting to slide off right away, but instead finding a stable platform. I turned myself around, still clinging onto the outside of the windowsill.

"Bring your book!"

I reached up and pulled my book out the window and held it tightly to my chest as I began to cautiously descend the slope, walking sideways and cringing with every creak that seemed to suggest that the roof would cave in under my weight at any minute.

"C'mon you can do it!" the other boy encouraged me, reaching out a hand as I got closer to him. He was now sitting with his legs crossed right in the middle of the crevice, not heeding any possible dangers that would normally come with two young children playing on rooftops that were about fifteen feet off the ground.

I took his hand and almost instantly felt a chill as I touched it, but considering the fact that the sun was beating down harshly on the roof that day, I didn't mind it as much and sat down in front of him, my book placed in my lap, my head tilted to the side curiously, wondering what my odd neighbor could possibly want with me.

He gazed at the book in wonder. "I wanted to buy that book when I went to the store last week!" he said excitedly, "but my mom won't let me get it!"

I opened the book in my lap as the other boy scooted closer to me so that our knees touched. I placed the book between us and we watched in pure joy as the pictures pop out one after another—dragons flying off the page, creatures blowing blazing fire in our direction, brave knights pointing a sword at my nose, princesses hopping onto the back of the dragon. We both gasped in our amazement, pointing out the amazing details to each other, impersonating the dragons together, and laughing at each other's expressions.

"You know," I said in my naïve excitement. "When I grow up, I'm gonna be a dragon trainer!"

"Woah, that's so cool!" the other boy hopped up excitedly, the book lurching forward and hitting my chest. "Then—Then you can take me on dragon rides and we can fly through clouds and stuff—that'll be so cool!"

"What if the dragon can't hold both of us at the same time?"

"Don't be silly!" the other boy looked down at me, a confident smile stretching from ear to ear. "We're three feet tall and skinny as sticks! Of course they can carry us!"

I frowned at him. "I-I'm not skinny."

"Yeah you are," the boy pulled me up to my feet and prodded me in the stomach. "You're stick thin, if you turned sideways, I'd see right through you!"

The boy laughed as I began to regret ever coming out of my window.

"But it's okay," he continued, "I'm really skinny, too. See?" The boy grabbed my hand and had me press my knuckles against his ribs, which were all bony and sharp, just like mine. "We're the same!"

And at that, I couldn't help but let a broad smile spread across my face as it occurred to me that never before had anyone ever told me that they were the same as me with such a proud expression.

"We're the same," I repeated happily. "We can both fit on a dragon at the same time!"

"Yeah!"

"Yeah!" We both lifted our hands in a high five, our palms meeting with a loud slap as a pain coursed through our bodies. We both yelped and clutched our pains before erupting into laughter.

"Hiccup?" my father's voice boomed and I felt the hair on my neck stand up in surprise.

"I have to go," I said reluctantly, holding my book to my chest and ascending the roof towards my window.

"That's okay, we can talk tomorrow!" the boy said eagerly. I nodded in agreement and we both scampered towards our windows. I stopped as I placed my hand on my windowsill and prepared to hoist myself up. I turned around to see the other boy swinging a leg into his room.

"Hey!" I called out. The boy turned around and looked at me quizzically. "What's your name?"

The boy grinned widely. "Jack Overland! The coolest and funnest kid on the block! It was nice to meet you, Hiccup!"

Jack pulled himself into his window and I watched as the stick keeping the window open disappeared and the window snapped shut and he was gone.

* * *

><p>"C'mon, Hiccup, you can do it!"<p>

I opened my mouth to reply to my father's encouragement only to be hit right in the forehead by the end of a football. I fell back into the grass all dizzy and confused. I wrenched my eyes open to see my father frowning over me in disappointment.

"Dad, my head hurts," I moaned as my dad wrapped his huge hands in my puny ones and helped me up. He raised a hand to my forehead to brush away the bangs that dangled in front of it.

"Okay, let's take a break for today and get some ice on that," he concluded, his disappointment completely apparent in his voice. I followed him into the house and sat down on a chair, my hand covering my forehead and my eyes watering from the pain.

"Dad, I don't like football," I muttered softly. He didn't answer, either because he didn't want to hear it or because he didn't actually hear it—I couldn't tell. I just looked at my feet as he walked around the kitchen in search of an ice pack. Eventually, my father placed an ice pack in front of me and I hastily grabbed it before running up to my room, flopping down on my bed, ice pack pressed firmly against my forehead. Eventually the pain did go away, but I remained on my bed anyway, curling up into a ball with the icepack still on my head.

I was eight years old and my father was trying to make me a professional football player.

The whole thing was very confusing to me, considering I couldn't play football in the slightest. Despite my confusion, however, I found myself sharing my father's disappointment and concern. It was really a wonder why I was so different from my father—I was barely able to carry a dictionary or remove the firm lock on the door without his help. Why couldn't I just do something as simple as playing football? It was ridiculous.

My thoughts were interrupted by a loud and persistent tapping at my window. I turned and wiped the water from my eyes to see Jack at the window, smiling widely and knocking, despite knowing that I could see him. I frowned and walked over to the window, pushing my toy chest out of the way and kicking a small stool with my foot towards the base of it. I climbed up, reveling in the fact that I had grown enough to use a smaller step to reach the window. Jack backed up as I pushed the window open.

"What do you want, Jack?"

"Woah, what happened to your face?" Jack gaped at me, pointing at my forehead and suppressing his giggles.

My hand flew up to my forehead and my face burned in my embarrassment. "I was playing catch with my dad and the ball hit my head, okay?" I explained as I hastily positioned my bangs over my wound.

"Aw, it's okay, Hic," Jack pat my head delicately and I suddenly felt very small. "Catch is for sissies anyway."

"It's not," I objected half-heartedly.

"You don't even like catch!"

"Wellâ€" "

Jack waved his hand at me. "Well, it doesn't really matter. I have something I want to show you!" He dove behind the window to grab something and I went up on my toes to peer over.

"What is it?"

Jack popped up and almost hit me in the head as he ascended. I jerked back a bit to get a full view of him. Jack held two cans in each hand with the words "Jack" and "Hiccup" written in messy, seven-year-old handwriting with paint. A long red string ran from the end of one of the cans to the other. His face held a proud, toothy grin that confused me greatly.

"Ta-da!"

I raised an eyebrow and tilted my head to one side, examining Jack's odd new toy. "What's that?"

"Okay, okay," Jack hopped up and down excitedly. "So remember when I told you about that movie I saw the other day?" I nodded. 'Well, they were using this to talk to each other and I thought it was so cool!" Jack placed the can labeled "Hiccup" on my windowsill. "Let's test it out!"

I watched as Jack ran back towards his window, untangling the string as he went.

"This isn't going to work, you know!" I called at him. He just waved off my disbelief and climbed back into his window. I watched him face me and wave before he tugged the string. My can began to fall off the edge and I lurched forward to grab it.

"Commander Hiccup, this is Admiral Jack speaking. Do you read me? Over," Jack's voice echoed off the walls of the can and I gazed at the can in confused awe.

"Admiral Jack, this is Commander Hiccup. I read you. Over," I responded.

"Awesome," I saw Jack throwing his fist in the air through the other window. "Now I can call you whenever I want. Like, we can close the window and if one of us wants to talk to the other, we can just pull the string!"

"Ew, I don't want you calling me in the middle of the night," I said jokingly into the can.

"Hiccup!" I heard my father call. I glanced at the clock sitting near my bed. It was time to eat.

"I have to go, Jack," I said, frowning although I knew he couldn't see me very well. "I'll talk to you later!"

"Okay. Later, Commander Hic!"

* * *

><p>"Alright, class," a peppy, young woman clapped her hands in an attempt to get the attention of a large classroom of third graders. Maybe three-quarters of them turned their heads to the front of the room, they're hands and feet constantly moving as if itching to get outside. "Let's start introducing ourselves to the rest of your friends! We can start over hereâ€"say your name and something special about yourself."<p>

The woman motioned towards a little blonde girl who sat in the front right corner with a large single braid dangling from her head. The girl stood up her arms crossed and her head held high. She struck an expression that was something between a smile and a smirk.

"I'm Astrid," she said firmly, "and I can take down every boy in this room all by myself."

Some of the children began to laugh, but were silenced by her deadly glare. The teacher laughed nervously, not expecting anything like this on her first day of teaching. "Th-that's very nice, Astrid. Let's move on."

And so the class went on alphabetically until they reached me. So there I was, an absolute sitting duck when it was my turn. I stood up nervously, my head buzzing as I tried to think of something to say.

"My name is Hiccup," I began, my high-pitched, eight-year-old voice matching the childish connotation that came with my own name and appearance. "And Iâ€|"

I was stuckâ€"absolutely lost for words as I searched my mind for something special about me. _What_ was special about me anyway? I'm small, even for my age? I know how to say the alphabet backwards without stopping?

"Um," I tried again, "what's special about me isâ€œ"

"Nothing!"

I felt my face burn at the indiscriminate call from the back of the room and felt a terrible urge to hide myself in my shirt when the classroom erupted in laughter. The teacher, whose name escapes me as you can probably tell, clapped her hands in vain, trying to get everyone's attention.

"Class," she called feebly, before clearing her throat. "_Class!_" The laughter died down for the most part, but I could still hear the giggles from behind me. She looked at me with pity and I felt like dying right then and there. "Hiccup, why don't you continue?"

"I, um," my face burned and my feet shuffled and I could feel my eyes brimming with tears.

"He's the best at building model airplanes!"

I jumped in shock and whirled around to see Jack sitting up straight a few seats behind me, his feet swinging enthusiastically in his chair.

"Plus he draws really good," Jack continued. "And he's the smartest guy I know!"

"And the wimpiest," a boy in the back muttered. I sat down mechanically, hiding my face in my embarrassment.

"Well, I'd rather be wimpy than stupid," Jack said.

"Did you just call me stupid?" I peeked behind me to see a rather large boy in the back standing up and glaring at Jack, his hands pressed on the table, his face turning redder with every second.

"Boys," the teacher called warningly.

Jack put his hands up in a mock surrender. "Hey, you were the one who said it out loud, I was just hinting at it."

I watched the boy boil and could practically see steam coming out of his ears as Jack remained smirking and leaning on the back legs of his chair with an affected air of nonchalance.

"Youâ€œ"

"Boys!" the teacher shouted impatiently. "If you say another word I'll give you a time out!"

The other boy sat down in his seat, which creaked under his great weight and just glared at Jack, who frowned at the teacher, most likely upset for ruining his fun.

"Thank you, Hiccup," the teacher rubbed her temples with her fingers and made a lazy motion for the next student to introduce themselves and I buried my head in my arms, no longer paying attention, my mind lingering on Jack's words.

* * *

><p>"You're gonna regret your words, you dweeb," the large boy pushed Jack's shoulders and he stumbled on his feet, quickly regaining his balance. I watched from the sidelines, shooting Jack a panicked look and he waved me away, as if telling me not to worry. I felt a chill run down my spine when I realized that I was practically surrounded by large eight year olds that seemed to tower over me.<p>

"Oh yeah? Who's gonna make me?" Jack growled at the boy before his lips curved into a smirk. "Not you, probably. You haven't got the brains. Or, maybe you just don't have a brain at all."

In a blur, the larger boy pounced on Jack and started pummeling him as Jack struggled beneath. The crowd roared "fight! Fight! Fight!" and I was pushed away from the scene. I lost my view of the scene and felt my heart drop when I heard Jack scream.

"Jack!" I called frantically, trying to push my way back to my friend to get pushed right back out. "Jack!"

"Hey!" a girl's stern voice rose above the clamor of the crowd and I turned to see the little blonde girl from class standing behind me in some sort of fierce fighting stance. "What do you guys think you're doing!" she shoved the other kids aside with surprising force, plowing through and making a clear path of vision. I stood there, completely stunned before I could see Jack, who's feet were slightly dangling off the ground, his nose bleeding profusely as the boy held him by his shirt collar.

"Jack!" I called again, running towards him. The girl held out an arm to keep me from getting further."

"Put him down!" the girl snarled at him. "Why don't you pick on someone your own size for once?"

"You're a girlâ€"what can you do about it?" the boy smiled menacingly at her.

The blonde girl raised an eyebrow before grabbing hold of the boy's wrist and twisting it. The boy yelped in pain and dropped Jack, who fell to the ground with a dull thud. I darted forward and helped Jack up to his feet, trying not to throw up when I saw his bruised eye and the blood pouring from his nostrils, staining his lips and dripping onto his shirt.

"Get lost if you know what's good for you," the girl growled at him. I watched as the other boy clenched his fists and a torn look crossed his face. The girl crossed her arms and looked up at him, unfaltering. They stared at each other before he relaxed his hands and motioned for the crowd to follow hi,

"C'mon, I don't want to fight any girly-girls anyway."

I swear I saw the girl bristle in fury at this insult, but she let it slide, walking in the other direction.

"Hey, uh, Astrid!" The girl turned towards me and I gulped when I realized that the hostile glint in her eye was still there. "Thank

you."

The girl shrugged before pointing at Jack. "Get him to the nurse or something, and tell him to stop picking dumb fights or else I'll beat him up next time."

I nodded slowly as Jack groaned and leaned on my shoulder. "I'll tell him."

I always do.

A/N: Ta-da! Chapter 2 is complete! As you can see, I'm doing some time jumps in this one. I think this one stretches over two years actually. The next one or two chapters are probably going to be some more childhood experiences and memoirs before we get to the main plot, so bear with me if this seems unorganized, confusing, or hastily put together.

And that's all! I'll try to get the next one out as soon as I can, I promise!

3. Chapter 3

Chapter 3

My school day begun as it always hadâ€"a rather aggressive bump on the shoulder that almost caused me to collide into the wall and a jeer from whoever felt like ruining my day.

"Well, if it isn't Hiccup the Useless," a voice mocked, as I was shoved aside on my way to my classroom. I attempted to get by the voice's owner as quickly as possible, but soon found my way blocked by a group of people whose faces I don't remember. "What's wrong, Hiccup? You can't do anything without Jack, huh?" Laughter surrounded me and I just stared at the ground.

Relax, Hiccup, I repeated over and over in my head.
Relax-relax-relax!

"It's not like he could do anything with him, anyway," another voice in front of me chimed in. "Jack can't even put up a proper fightâ€"how stupid is he?"

At that point something in me snappedâ€"I'm not exactly sure what it was. Pent up frustration? The noble and undying urge to protect my best friend? To this day, I'm not really sure why I finally found myself looking up at the group, my eyes hard and my lips moving.

"Yeah, I mean he only has one friend, how stupid of him to face an entire group by himself," I said. "It's not like he has an entire group to back him up, but then again, fighting in an entire group is pretty cowardlyâ€"maybe even weak."

A silence enveloped the group as they stared at me, some in shock that I actually spoke for once, and others still trying to wrap their heads around the message.

Should I run now?

I shifted my foot a bit, simultaneously reveling and despairing at my moment of bravery. I took a step back and panicked when I saw the face of the boy in front of me harden.

I pivoted on my heel and ran as quickly as I could from the scene, running through the halls, dodging students walking by. The sound of loud, clumsy stomping chased me as I turned a corner, almost running head first into an open door. A couple girls screeched as I ran past them, almost running one over.

"Sorry!" I called behind me out of habit, although I was already sure that they couldn't hear me over the thundering of shoes that were catching up to me. I felt a lump in my throat as I realized that they were just a few feet behind me, one of their hands grazing my hair as I darted forward. I could feel them gaining on me and I prepared myself for the worst beating of my life.

"What do you think you're doing?"

We all skidded to a stop as Astrid stepped in front of us, not even flinching when I almost slammed into her. She crossed her arms and raised an eyebrow at us, holding her hall monitor's notebook in her right hand. To my surprise, none of the other boys took this time to grab me and pummel me into dust. I guess, by this time, everyone had already classified Astrid as one of the most terrifying people in school, despite being barely four-and-a-half feet tall. She was fairly intimidating at this very moment—what with the condescending and fierce look in her eye and her notebook and pencil so threateningly close to each other, even though I'm pretty sure the hall monitor's role in elementary school was just something like a figurehead role.

"Running in the halls? I could tell on you right now, you know," Astrid threatened. "You'd be in _sooo_ much trouble—no recess for a month, maybe."

At her words, I heard the kids behind me shuffle sheepishly towards their respective classrooms. I waited a few seconds before following suit, urging myself to hurry to class as soon as possible to avoid any possible conflict.

"Wait, Hiccup."

I turned to see Astrid approaching me. We never really talked much, or interacted for that matter, aside from rare occasions where she'd meddle with Jack's stupid quarrels. She's never really participated in the teasing, though. Or the shoving and the other stuff even though she could probably become the leader of the "let's harass Hiccup" gang in two days tops. We were about the same height, or maybe I was half an inch shorter, but she still scared the hell out of me.

"Is Jack here today?" she asked, giving me a curious look.

"Um," I gulped. "N-no, not today—he, uh—"

"Got into another fight?" Astrid finished for me, frowning. I laughed sheepishly and nodded. She sighed exasperatedly. She gave me a look-over, something like concern passed over her face for half a

second before she began walking away from me. I started walking in the other direction towards my classroom.

"Hey, Hiccup?"

"Yeah?"

"Justâ€¦ be careful, okay?"

* * *

><p>I woke up a few nights later to the sound of the can-phone rattling against my window rather ferociously. I groaned and turned to my side, pressing my pillow over my head in a fruitless attempt to block out the noise. After two minutes I gave up and walked groggily over to the window. I glanced across the window to see Jack staring back at meâ€”or at least I think he was. Even as I took hold of the can-phone, the string continued to shake.<p>

I gave an annoyed yank on the string before answering. I rubbed my eyes and yawned as I spoke, "Jack, it's 3 in the morning. We're 8 years old and it is way past our bedtimeâ€”go to sleep."

"No, Hic, look!" Jack said excitedly. I stared back at him with confused, narrowed eyes, still tired and ready to just chuck the can out the window and go back to sleep. I saw Jack point down towards the roof.

I looked down and was shocked to see a thick bed of snow covering our conjoined rooftops, looking soft and clean. Snow was pretty common around here and I always felt pretty indifferent, if not annoyed, by the snow. After all, more snow meant my dad asking me to shovel it all up in hopes of giving me an opportunity to build some more muscle. However, Jack always loved the snow so much. Ever since he moved here, he would insist on me playing in the snow with him for hours.

"Let's build a snowman!" Jack said and I gazed at him with wide-eyed shock.

"Now?" I replied into the can. "It's freezing! We could just play tomorrow!"

"That sounds like loser talk. I say we go out and have a snowball fight on the roof!" Jack insisted. I heard a clink from the other can, signaling that Jack had put his end down. I saw Jack struggle with the window.

"Jack! It's way too cold and dark out! You'll hurt yourself!" By the time I made my objections, Jack had already propped his window open and slid out into the snow, pajamas and bare feet and all. He slid down his roof and played in that crevice between his roof and mine, not looking bothered by the snow in the slightest, and waving at me to join him.

I looked towards my bedroom door, which sat, as expected, closed and still. I looked back at Jack and put up a finger to tell him to hold on for a moment. I dashed towards my closet and flung open the door, sorting through my clothes before finding a thick coat and gloves. I considered sneaking downstairs to get my boots, but pushed that

thought out of my mind when I heard a loud snort coming from my dad's room.

I crawled back to my window and pulled on my coat and gloves before pushing the window open with my nubs-for-hands. The winter wind slapped my face and my teeth chattered as I climbed onto the windowsill and out the window. I lowered my feet and felt a chill run up my spine as I made contact with the snow and contemplated going back to sleep.

"C'mon, Hic, we haven't got all night!" Jack called, scraping the snow from the roof and forming a small pile. I slid down the roof towards Jack, the coat covering most of my body and shielding me, for the most part, from the cold. I tumbled into the crevice and Jack helped me up into a sitting position. And we both sat there, our legs crossed gathering snow into a tall hill that Jack called his "snow castle," pointing at each other and accusing the other of making the castle uneven.

As I packed snow onto a side of the castle wall, my hand bumped into Jack and my eyes darted to my section of the wall, looking to reprimand him for ruining my perfect wall. To my astonishment, I had noticed that Jack's fingers looked a bit pale—"well, paler than usual.

"Jack, are you okay?" I asked him, pointing at his hands.

Jack looked up from his handiwork and his eyebrows knitted in confusion until he saw where I was pointing. He raised his hands and turned them over in front of his face.

"Woah, that looks weird," Jack said, very amused by the appearance of his hands. He tried clapping his hands together, only for his fingers to bounce off of each other awkwardly. "I was wondering why I couldn't feel my finger tips."

"Jack, are you cold?" I frowned at him, feeling worried about the well being of my best friend. "Do you want my gloves? I have two of them," I offered.

Jack stared at his hands then glanced at my gloves, a look of longing in his eyes. He then shut his eyes tight and shook his head defiantly. "No way! I'm Jack Overland Frost! I can handle the cold any time, anywhere!" Jack crossed his arms defiantly.

I raised an eyebrow at him as I removed a glove. "That's so dumb. Just take the gloves!"

"No way—"won't you be cold, too?" Jack objected, pushing the glove away half-heartedly with his numb fingers.

"We could just wear one glove each—"that way we'll both be half as warm as we can be," I suggested, thinking this was the most logical solution.

Jack's eyes looked upward in thought as he considered my offer. He then nodded, agreeing that it was the best course of action, considering the fact that he'd rather fall into a lake before going back inside and leaving his precious castle unfinished. Jack took my glove and wiped one of his hands on his pajamas before sliding it in

and smiling for his newfound warmth.

We sat there for who knows how long and eventually sunlight peaked above the rooftops and the snow began to shine just a bit orange and I blinked, letting my eyes adjust to the light. I began to notice that the fingertips of my hare hand began to go pale and lose their feeling.

"Jack, are we done?" I ask, breathing on my fingers to warm them up.

"Just a second," Jack said, biting his lip and piling snow onto one side, patting it smooth with his gloved hand. He stood up and stepped back a bit, beckoning for me to follow him. I walked over to his side and we stared at our sculpture. Jack beamed at his work and I squinted at it.

"This looks dumb," I concluded. Jack frowned and punched my arm with his gloved hand. I winced and rubbed my arm, elbowing him lightly in the stomach in retaliation. "It doesn't even look like a castle!"

"It does, too!" Jack objected stubbornly, narrowing his eyes at our pile of ice. "Like if you squint really hard and move your head a little bit this wayâ€¦ You can kind of see a door and a window."

I did as he said and gazed at the sculpture for a good minute. "I don't see anything."

"Well, I do!" Jack said proudly. "It's the best castle in the world and you're not allowed to step in it!"

"Heyâ€¦I helped you make it!" I objected. "So I get to have part of the castle!"

"This is war!" Jack declared, tackling me into the snow. I wrenched myself away from his grasp, laughing and making gun noises as I pretended to shoot him with an invisible machine gun. Jack clutched his heart.

"Ugh! I'm dead!" Jack exaggerated, sticking out his tongue and falling to the ground. "Bleh!"

I lay down beside him and we laughed, elbowing each other in the ribs, making snow angels, and kicking snow onto each other.

"You know, we have to go to school today," I said nonchalantly as I noticed that it was bright enough for the street lamps to be off. I turned to Jack, who shrugged.

"Well, as long as our parents don't know, we'll be fine," Jack said, stifling a yawn.

"JACKSON OVERLAND FROST WHAT IN THE WORLD DO YOU THINK YOU'RE YOU DOING?!"

We winced as we heard Jack's mother call. The snow seemed to tumble in a mini avalanche as her angry voice reverberated throughout Jack's house. Jack shot up, looking terrified and I laughed at his frightened expression. He winced at me.

"Okay, never mind."

* * *

><p>"So," I spoke into the can, which I held up with my free hand. My frozen hand and my feet were submerged in bowls of warm water and a large blanket had been wrapped around my shoulders. "That was a bad idea."<p>

"Well, hey, at least your dad didn't ground you," Jack replied, his voice slightly muffled as, I imagined, he couldn't speak directly into the can since both of his hands were frozen. Surprisingly, his feet were just fine.

"He gave me a speech about responsibility and holding the Haddock name or somethingâ€"I didn't really get it," I admitted. "Something about living up to our Viking 'anne-sisters' and be able to resist the freezing cold? I don't know."

"Well, at least we get to skip school because of thisâ€|" Jack paused. "What's this called again?"

"It wasâ€| 'Frost bite' or something," I answered, remembering the conversation my dad had with Mrs. Frost just a while ago.

"That's a weird name," Jack replied, "It sounds like I'm going around biting people and making them freeze into blocks of ice." The line went silent for a moment and I imagined Jack frowning as he thought, the left corner of his mouth slightly higher than the right side, his eyebrows knitted together in thought. "That's the worst superpower ever," Jack concluded.

"C'mon, it's not that bad," I teased, "I mean, who wouldn't want a skinny boy who keeps getting time-outs to save them by biting them and getting his gross Jack-germs all over them. Best superhero ever."

"Shut up, Hiccupâ€"at least I have a superpower!" I could imagine Jack sticking his tongue out at me in defiance. "I mean all you can do is talk to cats and build airplane models."

"Hey, my models are cool," I said defensively, "Besides, I could call a whole army of models to attack you and your powers of frost biting would be useless!"

"Oh yeah, well my ice powers can be turned to an ice gun! Pew pew!" I looked out my window to see Jack leaning out of his own aiming his finger gun at me.

"Your ice gun is ineffective because I'm in a plane!" I said, faking evil laughter before aiming my own imaginary gun at him with my free hand. "Pewpewpew!"

"No! This isn't over yet!" Jack said into the can, his voice suddenly clear as I watched him pick up his can with his other hand.

"Jack, your hands better still be in that water or so help me!"

"Gotta go! Bye, Hic!"

* * *

><p>AN:**_ And thus concludes the third chapter! Hiccup's elementary school is quite scary isn't it? Talk about the mob mentality of third graders geez.

Anyway, thank you so much for waiting! I know my updates are ridiculously spaced out and for that I must apologize, you know the dealâ€"school, life, all that business.

But hey, maybe if you leave a review I'll update faster next time eh?
wink

4. Chapter 4

Chapter 4

I guess it's about time I get to a part of my memory that I guess you could say I've been sort of itching to get to.

It was Januaryâ€"Jack had just turned eleven and I was still ten years old. It had been freezing cold the entire weekâ€"I remember because Jack and I had woken up earlier that week and started writing messages on the frost that had gathered on our windows overnight. I wrapped myself in my blankets, shuffling around my room, trying to keep warm while simultaneously pretending to be a superhero. Snow had piled on the rooftops to the point where I could lean out of my window just a little bit to touch it. Of course, Jack was extremely pleased about this, as usual, and begged me to go exploring with him over the can-phone.

"Bring your slingshot and explorer's book," he said. "We're going on an adventure!"

And so I walked out of the front door to see him waiting eagerly, carrying a backpack full of candy and junk food, his eyes glittering with excitement, pulling me along as soon as I closed the front door. "C'mon, Hic, we're going to the forest!"

"Jack, the last time we tried going into the forest in the snow, we almost froze half to death."

"Don't be ridiculous," he frowned at me as we shuffled through the fresh, white snow, "_you_ froze half to deathâ€"I was okay."

"Oh, wow, you're absolutely right. I'm just being worried for no reason," I said, rolling my eyes. "By all means, let's go into the forest."

"Okay, so maybe that time didn't go so well," Jack admitted, "but we're more prepared now! I mean, look at you, you look like a marshmallow."

"Oh, shut up."

Our trip to the forest continued, Jack making jabs at my fashion choice and me shooting back witty comebacks as fast as I could. We

approached a tall metal fence and proceeded to climb it, stuffing our gloves into our pockets and freezing our hands on the cold metal. When we got to the very top, I glanced down, a lump forming in my throat as I stared down at the ten foot jump. Jack just leaped off the top and fell bottom first into the snow. He turned around, patting the snow off of him and motioned for me to come down.

"C'monâ€"you can be a princess and I can catch you!" Jack called to me, suppressing his giggles.

"Over my dead body," I growled, turning around to begin my descent. I wedged my feet into the little holes and wrapped my bare fingers around the railing, my teeth chattering as I went. I looked down behind me and, considering the fact that I was maybe four feet tall at the time, it seemed like I'd have a pretty nasty fall when I slipped. I gulped and continued downwards, going to great lengths to make sure I didn't fall.

"Today would be nice," Jack called at me. I looked behind me to see him faking a yawn.

"Jack, can you just wait for five seconds," I growled down at him. He pouted and crossed his arms. A silence enveloped us as Jack shifted uncomfortably below and I slowed down my movements, now mostly out of spite. The snow chilled my bones and, as I heard Jack kicking the snow with impatience, I started moving at a snail's pace, cackling as Jack groaned in frustration.

"Hurry uuuuuuuup," Jack whined. I laughed at his frustration, picking up the pace a little.

Suddenly, a loud bark filled the air to the point where the fence vibrated and my bones shook. I lost my footing on the fence in my shock and fell back, my heart stopping and my brain processing my fall in slow motion. I closed my eyes, bracing for impact, when I suddenly heard a small "oof!" from under me.

When I opened my eyes, I noticed that I was lying on a soft bed of snow. Well, mostly a soft bed of snowâ€"I felt Jack pushing on my back from underneath me.

"Geroff me-! You're so fat!"

"Hey, you said I was a twig just a few days ago," I argued stubbornly, refusing to move. Jack pushed me off and I face planted in the snow.

"You're a really fat twig," he said, dusting the snow off of his body before helping me up and patting the snow off of me.

"Well, youâ€" "

I was interrupted by a series of loud barks that reverberated through the forest. A chill ran down my spine and Jack's head darted around like a frantic rabbit.

"What is that?" he muttered, mostly to himself.

"A whale," I said bitingly, tugging the sleeve of Jack's jacket.

"It's a dog" probably an angry one at that. We shouldn't have come here." My panic built up as the barking continued, getting seemingly closer and much more aggressive. "Jack, let's go back."

Jack put a finger to his lip and tugged my arm in response, leading me away from the fence. "We'll be fine. Don't worry."

I gulped, but held onto his hand, following Jack's lead and staying close as we approached the source of the barking. We hid behind a tree, peering out to see a large dog barking at something huddled against the base of the tree.

"Jack, it might see us," I warned him.

'Sh," he nudged me in the ribs. "What's it barking at?"

I pressed my hands against the tree bark, moving forward a little bit and squinting at a puny black mass that stood out against the white snow. My eyes widened when I saw it was moving and something red was dripping from its side.

"Jack, it's a cat!" I said urgently, panicking. "I think it's hurt really bad!"

There was no reply and I was suddenly aware of the breeze that blew right behind me"where Jack was standing. I looked around frantically for my friend, my eyes skimming along the trees in search of his messy brown hair.

"HEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEY!"

I whirled around to see Jack standing twenty feet away from the dog, which turned towards him right when he launched a snowball at its face. The vicious canine bared its teeth, which seemed to be a lot pointier than I've seen in movies. I felt the blood drain from my face as it started running towards Jack. For a minute I thought I saw panic flash on Jack's face, but when I took the moment to emerge from behind the tree and run to his aid, his cocky smile returned and he took off running in the other direction, the dog hot on his heels, the barking fading into the distance.

I looked in the direction they were heading, silently praying that Jack would be okay. I rushed to the cat, kneeling onto the snow to pick it up. I was surprised to see it could probably fit in my hands if I cupped them together, making me panic even more when I realized how fragile this kitten could be. It hissed when I reached out to touch it, feebly flicking its paw towards me.

I was surprised to see a rather defiant and haughty look still in its eye even though its chest was breathing so heavily, parts of its fur obviously matted with fur. I scooped it up in my gloves as carefully as I can

I looked around frantically, walking as quickly as I could, following the footsteps Jack made in the snow. When I reached the end of Jack's trail, I saw that the dog's paw prints had lead off somewhere else. I turned back and forth, utterly confused.

"Jack?" I called tentatively.

"Pst! Up here!"

I tilted my head upwards to see Jack clutching a rather thin branch for dear life. He gave me a nervous smile that immediately turned into panic when we heard the branch crack.

"Jack, get down from there! We have to get this kitten some help quick!"

"Look, if I could get down now, I would've done it earlier," Jack argued. The branch cracked again, its base looking like it was going to snap at any moment.

"We already have an injured cat in our hands, I don't want to deal with you, too," I frowned at him, rather surprised at myself for being able to joke so easily in this predicament.

"Then, why don't you—" Jack's argument was cut off by a yelp of panic as the branch completely snapped and Jack plummeted face first into the snow. I winced and turned my back towards him, shielding the cat, as the snow was flung on us from Jack's fall. I peeked behind me to see Jack, splayed on the ground, his face in the snow, his arms to his sides and his legs apart. It was almost as if he was trying to make a backwards snow angel.

"Jack, are you okay?"

"I'm fantastic," he said bitterly, his voice muffled by the snow. He pushed himself up and shook the snow off of himself. "So how's that cat?"

"Really badly hurt," I repeated anxiously. "Jack, we really need to get some help—and fast!"

"Who would help us? They'd just make us take it to the pound!"

Jack and I shared a worried look and I gulped, thinking about all the TV shows I've watched about the pound and it's supposedly dark secrets. I felt a shiver run up my spine as I considered the possibilities for a brief moment—and it wasn't from the snow.

"W-we really don't have any other choice," I finally concluded.

"Well, even then, I don't know any certified animal doc—" Jack suddenly paused, his look of nervous confusion turning into a smug and secret smile. I knew this smile anywhere—"this is the smile Jack gets when he thinks of an amazing prank that can get us in trouble. This is the smile Jack gets when he decides the kid across the street is going to pay for stealing his bike. The smile Jack gets when he spots the next victim of his endless desire for fun.

"Jack, this really isn't the time," I said warningly, nudging him with my elbow to draw the attention back to the kitten that still breathed heavily in my hand.

"Don't worry, I'm not doing another prank," Jack pulled my elbow towards the fence that led back into town. "Just believe me, Hic."

I opened my mouth to object, but changed my mind when I saw the determination etched across Jack's face, which normally wore a carefree expression. I sighed as he pulled me along. "At least let me walk by myself."

"Oh, right," Jack let go of my arm and pointed towards a gap in the gates that led into another neighborhood. "It's this way."

I really wasn't sure how Jack knew the way to get into town from the forest, but on second thought, he did tend to sneak out of the house often and go on adventures while I did my homework after school and he never really tells me where he goes—just that he gets in a lot of trouble, but he has a lot of fun doing it. We squeezed ourselves through a crevice between two fences and found ourselves at the neighborhood just outside of our small town. We trudged as quickly as we could through the snow to the edge of a line of uniform houses, not unlike the ones in our neighborhood.

The streetlamps seemed brighter in town and the traffic seemed busier and the people seemed louder. No one even noticed two ten year old boys shuffling through the crowd, trying to get to the town shopping center. Some stores still had their New Year's decorations up while others already began putting up their Valentine's Day paraphernalia. We weaved past the crowd, muttering our "excuse me!"s, "coming through!"s, and "get out of the way!"s until I found us standing in front of a shop devoid of any sort of celebratory decorum advertisements. The sign over the door read "Aster's Pets."

I looked at Jack in confusion. "Okay, I know you have some good intentions and all that, but I'm pretty sure that just because they have animals in a pet shop it doesn't mean there's gonna be a vet—"

"Oh, shut up, I know what I'm doing," Jack rolled his eyes, ushering me into the shop. A little chime rang as the door closed around us and I found myself in distracted awe of all the animals that gazed at us for a moment as we walked in. The shop was pretty empty, and I guess I'm not surprised, since most people were still on their winter vacations. The interior was painted a shade of grass green that reminded me vaguely of spring.

A tall man walked in from a room in the back, carrying a tall stack of boxes, which he placed on the counter. He couldn't have been more than 25 and had dark hair and tattoos plastered all over his arms. He turned towards us.

"Hey, can I help—" he began in a peculiar accent and then frowning as soon as he saw Jack, who gave him a smug look. "Oh no, it's you. Haven't you already caused me enough grief, kid?"

"Not now, Aster—we have bigger problems," Jack said with determination and maturity that I didn't expect from him, pulling my arm towards the counter.

The man called Aster opened his mouth to object to something, but suddenly stopped when he laid his eyes on the kitten huddling in my palms. I walked up to the counter nervously peeking up at Aster for just a moment. His stern expression had turned into one of soft concern. He motioned me forward and held out his hands, in which I placed the small kitten.

He inspected it for a second, gently raising a paw and giving it a quick look. He looked back up at Jack and gave him an accusing glare.

"Did you have anything to do with this?"

Jack pouted and crossed his arm in defiance. "Hey, Hic and I just found it huddled near a tree in the forest, okay? If it wasn't for us, a dog would've eaten it!"

"It's too bad it didn't eat you," Aster scoffed with a disappointed shake of the head. Despite the circumstances, it still managed to squeeze a giggle out of me. I slapped my hand over my mouth as Jack cast me a disdainful pout.

"It almost did!" Jack piped up as Aster looked over our kitten again.

Aster looked up at Jack, giving him the same concerned look-over he was giving the kitten. "Really? Are you hurt or anything?" he asked urgently.

"Aw, you do care!" Jack cooed, breaking into a mischievous grin. Aster rolled his eyes and turned his attention back towards the frail life in his hands.

"I think I'll be able to fix him up. He'll be alright," Aster finally concluded. I sighed in relief and Jack and I shared a celebratory glance. Aster smiled at our revelation and he headed into a room in the back. "Why don't you guys come back in two or three days to check up on the little guy?"

"You'd really let us?" Jack said, his eyes big and surprised as he hopped up to the counter.

"I wouldn't let you," Aster said with an affected sneer, "but maybe if you went with Fun-sized over here. He at least seems a lot better-behaved than you."

I opened my mouth to object to his comment about my height, but quickly thought better of it, considering he was three times my size. I just smiled at him gratefully. "Thank you for doing this."

Aster grinned at us as he headed towards the back of the shop. "Go home, you two," he called over his shoulder. "I don't want Frost over there messing with my birds again."

I raised a curious eyebrow at the tall man before whipping my head around to see Jack whip his finger out from between the bars of a bird cage, casting a guilty smile at Aster, who smirked before disappearing behind curtains.

Much to Jack's disdain, I insisted that we head home as the snowfall began to pick up. We made our way back, trudging through the snow and taking a detour back to the neighborhood to avoid the dog that was still probably lurking in the forest.

"Do you think it'll be alright?" I finally piped up during our walk. "I mean, it looked really hurt andâ€" "

"Hiccup," Jack said firmly, turning towards me and crossing his arms with confidence, "that cat's a fighter. If anything, he'll be more than okay. I mean, did you see the way he squirmed in your hands?"

"I guess, butâ€"

" 'Butts' are for sitting, Hic," Jack said matter-of-factly, turning on his heel with some difficulty and tapping me lightly on the nose. I blinked stupidly and shook my head in surprise. "He'll _definitely_ be okay!"

I gave into Jack's determination and shoved aside my own worries for a minute, continuing our journey in silence. My mind wandered for a bit and I began to remember a concern we had earlier. I stopped in my tracks and stared at the ground in thought. Jack, who was lost in his own thoughts, walked a bit ahead of me before noticing my absence from his side and turning to give me a curious look. I looked up with him and frowned. "Who's going to keep the cat?"

Jack gazed at me with a shocked expression, opening and closing his mouth several times as he tried and failed to propose a solution to our problem. He stared at the ground, scratching his chin in his thought before looking at me confidently. "I can keep it! My parents said they wanted me to have another friend soon anyway! They said I'd be getting one soonâ€"so why not now?"

I raised an eyebrow at him. "Are you a kajillion percent sure? What if your mom eats him?"

Jack made an expression of mock offense at me. "Hey! My mom has only been eating watermelonsâ€"I know. I've asked."

"Whole watermelons?" I raise an eyebrow at him as I recalled Mrs. Frost's image as of the past couple of months.

Jack waved his hand at me. "Don't worry about it! He'll be safe with me!"

Eventually we did reach our respective homes. We said our good-byes for the next few minutes and retreated into our households. I hung my coat on the hanger and tiptoed through the house, trying not to wake my dad, who was napping peacefully on the couch. I then retreated to the safe haven that was my bedroom, closed the door and curtains, and read everything I owned about cats.

Later that night, I was awoken by the sounds of sirens and bright flashing lights that peaked through my curtains. Just like the night the Frosts moved in, I walked to the window and pressed my face against it, watching them with curiosity and alarm as I saw them load Mrs. Frost into the ambulance. I looked across towards Jack's window for an explanation, only to see his bedroom empty, but his lights left on.

Suddenly, the sound of the doorbell echoed throughout my house and I heard my father step out into the hallway straight away. I quietly followed him out and peeked down at him from the staircase as he yanked the door open. I saw my father standing at the door, speaking in hushed voices with Mr. Frost. Jack clung to his father's side with

a shocked and worried expression on his face. I watched Jack for a minute as his eyes darted around in distress. I watched as Jack gazed back up to his father as he began to usher Jack into my house before running off. My father closed the door and looked right up at me. I quickly ducked behind the wall next to the staircase in a vain attempt to hide.

"Hiccup, I know you're there," my father called. I peeked from behind the wall to see my father staring at me sternly. I watched as he and Jack walked up the stairs, Jack still in absolute shock. My father crouched down to look at me with a soft expression that I did not see very often. "Hiccup why don't you and Jack have a sleepover tonight?"

I stared at my father in confusion as he turned to Jack and gave him a pat on the head. "Everything's all right, Jack. You can see your parents tomorrow and it will all be okay."

Jack nodded slowly and I walked over to take his hand and lead him to my room. I flipped the lights on before closing the door and stared at Jack in curiosity. A moment of silence enveloped us before he finally spoke.

"I don't think I can keep the cat," Jack squeaked.

"Wait, what happened?" I asked worriedly.

"I don't know, I just," Jack looked at me helplessly. "I went home and asked my parents about the cat. And I threw a fit when they said no and. All of a sudden my mom started panicking and telling my dad that they needed to go to the hospital." Jack began to mumble, mostly to himself, looking at the ground the entire time as he rambled in confusion.

"Jack," I said meekly as he began to pace around my room nervously. "Jack!"

He stopped in his tracks and looked back at me like a deer caught in headlights. His eyes were wide with concern and he looked so distraught—something that made him basically unrecognizable to me. I felt my heart sink at the sudden disappearance of his normally carefree and cheerful expression and I was unsure of what to do. So I did what any close friend would _obviously_ do.

I reached up and ruffled Jack's hair and his expression of distress quickly changed to one of surprise as he stared at me in confusion.

"What are you doing?"

"I don't know—my dad said my mom used to do this when I was sad so I'd stop crying," I shrugged. "It'll be okay, Jack. My dad even said we could visit them in the morning."

He still looked unsure so I gave his hair another ruffle. "Jack, it's not your fault."

Jack opened his mouth to say something, but promptly closed it, as if changing his mind. He repeated this several times and I tried my best to give him the most comforting smile I could muster, my hand still

awkwardly placed on his soft brown hair.

Jack then rolled over into fits of laughter and I stared at him in confusion. He smiled, the familiar sparkle in his eyes a comfort to me, as he rolled onto his side. "You're a loser, Hiccup. Who even pets people's heads when they're feeling sad?"

I blushed furiously and crossed my arms in defiance. "Well, hey! You were being a big crybabyâ€"it's not my fault." I stuck my tongue out at him. "If you don't want my help, you can pet your own head!"

"Wait, noâ€"it felt nice," Jack pouted at me.

"What are you, a puppy?"

"Yeah, so you have to pet my hair again."

"Gross, no," I said, faking a barfing noise. "I'm never doing that againâ€"I might catch your stupid." I retreated back to my bed.

"But Hiccuup, I'm _sad_," Jack whined, sitting at the edge of my bed.

"Puppies have to sleep on the ground, Jack," I teased. I laughed as Jack frowned at me in mock anger, crossing his arms and turning away from me, sticking his nose in the air. "I'm just kidding. You can sleep on the side."

"Sweet," Jack hopped under the covers as I built a pillow barrier between us.

"You have to stay on _your_ side," I ordered him. "If you get even a hair over this wall, I'll kick you off the bed."

"Yeah, yeah," Jack said, yawning. "Just go to sleep, Hic."

I chuckled and reached over to pull the chord on my lamp. We were wrapped in a darkness that was only eased by the moonlight that peaked through the curtain. I pulled the blanket up to my shoulders and put my back against the pillow wall, yawning and shutting my eyes.

"Hiccup?"

"What?"

"Thank you."

"Mhmm," I yawned. "Goodnight, Jack."

"Goodnight, Hiccup."

When I woke up in the morning, the pillow wall had been breached and Jack's head lay on my stomach, his legs dangling off the side of the bed, and a calm smile plastered on his face in his sleep.

* * *

><p>AN:**_ I was planning on making this chapter longer,

but I decided to cut this in half mostly because it's been a while since I last updated and I wanted to give you guys what I've gotten so far!

I don't know I actually really didn't like this chapter that much, but I wanted to get this part out of the way so I can move on. Haha, so you'll have to forgive me for this sucky chapter. U n U

I'll post the next chapter as soon as I finish up some of the other fics I have, so thanks for your patience, guys! I really appreciate it!

End
file.